

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace paragraph [0048] of the specification as published by the following rewritten paragraph:

[0048] On the other hand, the retrieval optical system 24 is configured to include: a retrieval imaging device 30 which is disposed on the optical path of a diffracted beam, produced when the recording medium 16 is irradiated with a signal beam from the object optical system 18, to receive the diffracted beam; and a focusing lens 24A which is disposed on the optical path of the diffracted beam between the retrieval imaging device 30 and the recording medium 16. Retrieval imaging device 30 is also herein referred to as search imaging device 30.

Please replace paragraphs [0051]-[0052] of the specification as published by the following rewritten paragraphs:

[0051] The spatial light modulator 26 is also allowed to encode a data image to be retrieved, by the same encoding method as for recording the data image and display the resulting data image on part or front part of the data blocks DB11 to DB33 as block information. Here, the data block on which the data image to be retrieved is displayed as block information is referred to as the retrieval data block DBS (see FIG. 3(B)). A data page that includes an encoded data image, such as the data page containing data blocks DB11 to DB33, used to retrieve a data image, is herein referred to as a search data page and an encoded data image in a data block of a search data page is herein referred to as an encoded search image or encoded search information.

[0052] Note that, in the first embodiment, the data blocks DB11 to DB33 are designed such that each includes a total of 16 pixels in a four by four matrix, and at the time of recording, any of the data blocks DB11 to DB33 has six ON pixels just like the data page

DP shown in FIG. 2(A)-3(A).